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BENHADAD AND HADADEZER

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Ever since the decipherment of the inscriptions of Shalmaneser II of Assyria (860–25 B.C.), in which he mentions his defeat at 𐤀𐤏𐤏𐤏𐤏 of the Syrian allies headed by Adad (^{ilu}IM)-'idri (=Hadadezer) of Damascus, with Ahab of Israel and other kings as vassals, attempts have been made to harmonize the supposed differences between the Assyrian and Old Testament records. It was at once noticed that the name of the king of Syria, contemporary with Ahab of Israel, was Benhadad in the Hebrew narrative (I Kings, chaps. 20 and 22), but Adad-'idri in the cuneiform. It was assumed that the same person must be referred to in both accounts, and consequently attempts were made to show that the names were really the same. As we shall see below, the reason for assuming the identity of the two names was based upon the assumption that chaps. 20 and 22 of I Kings relate events all of which must have fallen within the last five years of Ahab's reign. In our discussion of the problems involved, it may be well to consider (1) the question of names and (2) the historical problem.

I. BENHADAD-HADADEZER

It is a well-known fact that in the Old Testament account of Ahab's Syrian wars, I Kings, chaps. 20 f., the name of the king of Syria is given as Benhadad, while in Shalmaneser's account of his campaigns in Syria the name of the king of Damascus with whom Ahab of Israel and a number of other Syrian princes had formed a defensive alliance against the common enemy Assyria, is given as ^{ilu}IM-'idri. This name has been read differently as Bir-'idri, Dadda-'idri or Adad-'idri. As we shall see from the following discussion, these different readings are the results of attempts to explain why the Hebrew form of the name is different from that of the cuneiform inscriptions. Since Dadda-'idri and Adad-'idri are really the same (see below), we may divide this section of our discussion into three parts, dealing with the readings Bir-'idri and Adad-'idri, and finally with the name Benhadad.

1. Bir-'idri.—It should be stated at the outset that the only reason why this reading was ever proposed was because scholars have been unanimous in holding that Benhadad (II) of I Kings, chaps. 20 f., and ^{ilu}IM-'idri of Shalmaneser's inscriptions are one and the same person. The reading was an attempt to harmonize the two accounts. The reading Bir for the ideogram ^{ilu}IM was proposed by Delitzsch, *Zeitschrift für Keilschriftforschung*, II, 161 f., and the name read Bir-'idri, "Bir (d. i. der Luft- und Himmels-gott) ist mein Schmuck, meine Zier." This reading was then declared to be the same as the Hebrew form Benhadad, which should be read Bin- or Bir-hader (ḥidri) in view of the Septuagint which reads *ὁὸς* Ἀδερ, that is, בִּיהֲדָר instead of בִּיהֲדָר. Delitzsch has since tacitly abandoned this reading.¹ Winckler, *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, 3d ed., 133, and elsewhere, still holds to this solution of the problem. Zimmern, in his part of the last-named volume, p. 446, discussed the readings Bir, Bur, Mir, and Mur as names of the weather-god IM = Adad (Hadad), and concluded that there was little evidence for these readings. However, in the *Hilprecht Anniversary Volume*, 299 f., he again takes up the discussion and concludes that the evidence now seems to him to point the other way, and that there probably *was* an Aramaic god בר whose name was given in cuneiform as ^{ilu}IM. With such uncertainty on the part of the Assyriologists, it is not surprising that Old Testament scholars are in doubt as to which side to take. So, for example, Kittel, in the second edition (1909) of his *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, II, 355 f., wavers between Dadda-idri, Dadda (Bir)-idri, Benhadad Bir-idri and Benhadad-Hadadezer.

Is Bir (בר) a possible reading of the ideogram ^{ilu}IM? That is, was there a west-Semitic, Aramaic god Bir whose name the Assyrian scribes rendered in cuneiform by the ideogram ^{ilu}IM? As has already been stated, Delitzsch merely assumed the reading Bir as possible in view of the names we are discussing. Likewise Winckler was unable to bring any positive evidence for this reading.² Zim-

¹ *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, II, 624.

² Both Delitzsch's and Winckler's arguments were based chiefly upon the name Bur-Rammān. But we now know that the element Bur means "offspring," see below, p. 274. (Winckler's discussion is found in his *Alttestamentliche Untersuchungen*, 69 f.) If this element were the name of a deity the determinative ^{ilu} would stand before it as it stands before Rammān.

mern now holds that such a reading is possible in view of the names Bar-Şur (ברצור) and Bar-Rekub (בררכב) of the Senjirli inscriptions. Nathaniel Schmidt, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XXIX, 63 f., sees in the name (Kadesh)-Barnea (ברנע) evidence of a god Bar or Bir (בר), as well as in ברלע, ברשע (Gen. 14:2)³ and certain proper names occurring in the Amarna letters: Biiri, Buribita, Biridiya, Biridašia, Biriawaza and Buršelem. Let us examine these names.

As stated, the names Bar-Şur and Bar-Rekub are found in the Senjirli inscriptions (cf. Cooke, *North Semitic Inscriptions*, 171 f.): "This statue Bar-Rekub placed to his father Panammu, son of Bar-Şur," etc., p. 173; "I am Bar-Rekub, son of Panammu," etc., p. 181. Cooke, p. 165, translates the name Bar-Rekub as "son of Rekub-(el)." The name of a deity Rekub-el⁴ occurs in these same inscriptions, and Cooke's suggestion that Rekub in Bar-Rekub is a shortened form of Rekub-el is certainly most probable.⁵ So the name Bar-Şur means "son of Şur." The god Şur is vouched for by the biblical proper name פרוצור, Num. 1:10, and the place name ביתצור, Josh. 15:58.⁶ In KAT³, 477, Zimmern uses the name Bar-Şur (ברצור) to prove the existence of a god Şur, "rock," while in the HAV, 302, he uses the same name to prove the possibility of the existence of an Aramaic god Bar (בר). The name can hardly be used to prove both, and, since the god Şur is sufficiently well attested, we may safely put aside the two names ברצור and בררכב as furnishing no evidence for the existence of a god Bar (בר). As we shall see below, the element בר = son is common in proper names.

The names cited by Schmidt are, it seems to the writer, still less to the point. Taking the names he has gathered from the

³ Schmidt thinks ברלע, and not ברע, was the original name of the king of Sodom; cf. certain LXX readings Βαλλε and Βαπλα.

⁴ The vocalization of this name is of course doubtful. Other readings Rakkab-el, Rekab-el, have been proposed. The name means chariot or steed, or perhaps charioteer, of El.

⁵ Note that in this same inscription (p. 161) we have first the names of the deities "Hadad and El and Reshef and Rekub-el and Shamash," l. 2, but "Hadad and El and Rekub-el and Shamash and Arqu-reshef," l. 11. If we follow Meyer, *Die Israeliten*, 282 f., in making Jacob a shortened form of Jacob-el (cf. Jephthah with Jephthah-el, Josh. 19:14), and regard Jacob as having been at one time a deity, we have parallels in this and similar Old Testament names.

⁶ Cooke, *op. cit.*, 175.

Amarna letters first: (1) Bi-e-ri. This name should perhaps rather be compared with Hebrew בִּיאֵר, father of Hosea. At any rate, the name contains a long vowel between the ב and the ר, which is nowhere indicated in the names which have so far been brought forward as possibly containing the element בר. (2) The name Buribita, which is next cited, is to be read Ahribta.⁷ As for the names Biridya, Biridašwa, Biriamaža, it is doubtful whether any are even Semitic.⁸ The same may be said of the place name Bu-ru-zi-lim which has been transformed by Winckler into Buru-šilim and used as evidence of the existence of a god Šelem (see *KAT*³, 477).⁹ None of these names can be used as evidence of a god בר. The same may be said of the names (Kadesh)-Barnea, ברנע, Birsha¹⁰ (ברשע, LXX; Βαρσα), king of Gomorrah, Gen. 14:2, and ברלע, king of Sodom.¹¹ Schmidt's suggested etymologies might be possible if the existence of a god בר had been demonstrated, but this is far from being the case.

⁷ Schmidt follows Winckler's readings, but these must now be corrected in many cases by the readings furnished by Knudtzon's edition of the Amarna letters.

⁸ It has long been observed that many of the proper names of the Amarna letters are non-Semitic. Some are Indo-Germanic, others Hittite or Mitannian. Cf. the writer's article "Some Hittite and Mitannian Personal Names," *AJSL*, January, 1910, 96 f. So names like Artatama are clearly Iranian; cf. the Persian names Ἀρτάβατος, Ἀρταγέρσης, Ἀρτακάμας, Ἀρταξέρξης. Others seem to be neither Semitic, Hittite-Mitannian nor Indo-European, but seem to be analogous to the "pre-Greek," Karian, Lydian, Phrygian, etc., names of Greece and western Asia Minor, collected and arranged in Kretschmer's *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*. If, as the writer believes, the endings -wa and -ma in these names are the same, then a name like Biridašwa is to be compared with such names as Barhuilwa, Etagama (*AJSL*, January, 1910, 97 f.), and with the names with *m*-suffix in Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, 322 f. The name Biriamaža is clearly similar in form to Akizzi, Sizzi, Sissi, Papassi, Kirbassi, Mattiuaza, Namiawazi (*AJSL*, *ibid.*, 96 f.), all of which are to be compared with the names with *s*-suffixes in Kretschmer, *op. cit.*, 311 f. In the article quoted the writer followed E. Meyer in regarding Mattiuaza as probably Aryan (Iranian), p. 101, but further study has convinced him that it would be better to regard many of these names merely as "pre-Greek," without specifying whether they are Iranian or Hittite. This change of attitude on the part of the writer was occasioned in particular by the resemblance of the ending -waza to the ending of such names as Μεμινάσας, Ἐμινάσας, Kretschmer, p. 315; Βεεναίσις, Ἐμινάσις, Κεδαμούσσις, Ουάσις, Τερθέμασις, etc., *ibid.*, 316, 317; Ἀκταίνασις, Ἀρνασσις, Πανύνασις, *ibid.*, 321, 322. For the ending -ya of Biridya, cf. my article, under "Akiya."

⁹ That Buruzilim is to be read Buru-šilim (šelem) is not altogether improbable. However, the *m* on the end of this word may be *mim*mation, not a radical. If it were a radical we should expect a reading like Buruzilimi; cf., however, the Amarna writing of Jerusalem, Urusalim.

¹⁰ It has been suggested that these names are late insertions in the text; cf. Skinner, *Genesis*, 259.

¹¹ Since ברלע is only a hypothetical reading (see note 3), there are only two names which need be considered. The writer has no suggestion as to the etymology of ברנע or ברשע. Meyer, *Israeliten*, 80, n. 1, suggests that Barnea' "ist wohl der profane Name des Orts," as distinguished from the name Kadesh = "the sanctuary."

There is another line of evidence, which, while negative, still seems to the writer to weigh against the probability that the ideogram ^{ilu}IM stood for a west-Semitic deity בר. In Vols. XXIV and XXV of the *Cuneiform Texts in the British Museum*, Mr. King has published extensive lists of Babylonian-Assyrian deities compiled by the Babylonian priests, in which are given the different names by which these deities were known, their attributes, as well as the current identifications of foreign with Babylonian deities. So for example in Vol. XXV, Pl. 16, we have a list of names by which the god IM was known. In l. 16, he is identified with Addu, and in the next line with Dadu, while explanatory notes add that these were his names in Amurru. Now Amurru was the general name for Syria-Palestine in the Assyrian period of Old Testament history, in which period these lists of deities were compiled. In the same place we also find ^{ilu}IM identified with the god Tešub of Subartu (roughly speaking, Mesopotamia), the Cassite god Buriaš, and others. In Vol. XXIV, Pl. 32, we find nine deities identified with ^{ilu}IM; Pl. 40, eleven more (the tablet is broken; there were more identifications here); Vol. XXV, Pls. 6 f., forty-one. Besides these there are other stray references. We have thus more than sixty names which are identified with ^{ilu}IM, including the well-known variant names of the west-Semitic weather-god Adad (Hebrew Hadad), Addu, Dadu, as well as Amurru (MAR-TU). As already stated, these lists have explanatory notes in connection with the names of foreign deities identified with ^{ilu}IM. But these lists do not include a name Bir.¹²

¹² The lists, however, show that there was a god Mir or Mur, identified with ^{ilu}IM. (But there is nothing to indicate that he is of west-Semitic origin, a possibility mentioned below.) See Vol. XXIV, Pl. 16, l. 8; Pl. 17, l. 30; Pl. 18, rev., l. 2; Pl. 32, ll. 119-20; also King in the Introduction to Vol. XXIV, pp. 11 f. (The names in Vol. XXIV have been tabulated by Michatz, *Die Götterlisten der Serie An ^{ilu}A-nu-um*.) The existence of a god Mir does not, however, prove the existence of one Bir, as Hilprecht, *Assyriaca*, 77, n. 1, argued. In Vol. XXV, Pls. 16 f., l. 8, we have the name of a god Pi-ir, and l. 32, I-lu-pi-ir. The name may be a variant of Mir, since the sign *pi* may be read *me* (Brünnow, 7963). The god ^{ilu}BE-ir (*III R*, 66, 26d, also *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, II, 567) cannot be identified with Adad, even if the reading of this name should turn out to be Ber, for as Meissner observed, it is not probable that we should have the same deity called upon twice in succession in an oath formula, as would be the case if we identified BE-ir with IM (Adad). The oath formula reads, "By Ašur, Adad, BE-ir, the Assyrian Bēl and the Assyrian Ištar, etc." For a discussion of the ideograms ^{ilu}IM-RA and ^{ilu}MIR-RA, see Ranke, *Personal Names*, 202. Whether Mur, Mir, MIR-RA, IM-RA, may not turn out to be variant forms of Amurru is a question which cannot be discussed here. The reading Immēru, suggested by Thureau-Dangin for IM-RA, would not conflict with such an identification.

It is of course possible that the name occurred on those parts of the tablets which have been lost, but there is a strong probability that, if there had been a west-Semitic god Bir or Bur known to the Assyrian scribes, his name would appear together with those of Addu, Dadu, and Amurru on Pl. 16 of Vol. XXV. The fact to be borne in mind is that, after all, the existence of a deity Bir or Bur¹³ has never been demonstrated but merely *inferred*.

2. Adad-'idri = Hadadezer.—Schrader, as early as 1878, proposed the correct reading of this name, and called attention to the fact that the name is the same as that of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, mentioned in II Sam. 8:3 f.¹⁴ The ideogram ^{ilu}IM, formerly read Rammân¹⁵ by Assyriologists, is now always to be read Adad¹⁶ unless there are definite reasons for some other reading, that is to say, Adad is the ordinary name of the weather-god in Assyrian. Addu, Addi, and Dadda are variants of the same name, as is also the Hebrew and Aramaic form Hadad.¹⁷ There can be little doubt, then, that when Shalmaneser's scribes wrote ^{ilu}IM-'idri, they pronounced the name Adad-'idri.

The second element of the name, 'idri, which is the regular cuneiform rendering of the Aramaic עֲדִי, Hebrew עֲדִי, is now

¹³ The element Bur, see below, found in many proper names, means "offspring."

¹⁴ Second edition of his *Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, 200 f., and *Zeitschrift für Keilschriftforschung*, II, 365 f.

¹⁵ Rammân (cf. Hebrew Rimmon) was an epithet of the weather-god Adad, and signifies "the thunderer." The discoveries in Crete and Asia Minor during the last ten years have made it evident that the two chief deities of this whole eastern Mediterranean world were the great mother-goddess, known as Mâ, Ammas, Cybele (Aphrodite-Venus, Ishtar among the Semites), and the weather-god, known by different names. The Hittites and Mitannians called him Tešub (see above, p. 271), the Amorites called him Amurru (MAR-TU) or Adad, which was also the name by which the Assyrians knew him. As already indicated, Rammân is an epithet meaning "the thunderer." Many statues and reliefs of this god have been found in Asia Minor (see Garstang, *The Land of the Hittites*, Pl. LXXVII), on which he is generally represented as carrying the double-ax (a symbol found all over Crete and Asia Minor) or a three-forked bolt of lightning. The Greeks gave him different names, such as Ζεὺς Σπαρτίος, Ζεὺς Βροντῶν, Κεραυνίος, all of which show his strenuous character. See Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, II, 635 f., 711 f. Gressmann, in his *Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, has pointed out the fact that the god of the Israelites, Yahweh, was predominantly a god of lightnings and the storm, and his resemblance to Hadad is really so close that some scholars see in him a local form of this western-Asiatic weather-god (Ward, *AJSL*, XXV [1909], 175 f.).

¹⁶ King, *Annals of the Kings of Assyria*, I, pp. lxxiv f.

¹⁷ Hadad is the chief deity of the Senjirli inscriptions; cf. Cooke, *op. cit.*, 159 f. The name Hadad-Rimmôn, Zach. 12:11, combines the name and epithet of the god. Cf. Tab-Rimmôn, I Kings 15:18. Naaman's master worshiped in the house of Rimmôn, II Kings 6:15 f.

known as an element of many Mesopotamian personal names of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. Examples are Atar-idri, Bêl-harrâni-idri, Ilu-idri, Milki-idri, Samsi-idri, etc.¹⁸ There remains no reason for reading ^{ilu}IM-'idri in any other way than Adad-'idri = Hadadezer.

It remains to be seen why the Hebrew name Benhadad should *not* be changed to Bir-hader = Bir-idri. That is, why the form בִּיהַדָּד should not be changed to בִּיהַדָּר or בִּיהַדֵּר. We have already seen why Winckler considers the masoretic writing the result of "Umdeutung und Verschreibung" of the supposed form Bir-'idri. He was attempting to identify the name Benhadad of I Kings, 20 f., with Adad-'idri of Shalmaneser's inscriptions. But with the possibility of the reading Bir-'idri gone, some other explanation must be looked for in case the two names actually refer to the same person. Before taking up this problem, let us look at the name Benhadad.

3. Benhadad.—Benhadad means "son of Hadad." The Aramaic form would be Barhadad. We have already referred to the names Bar-Šur and Bar-Rekub of the Senjirli inscriptions. In II Kings 13:24 f., we have an account of the activities of Benhadad, son of Hazael. In all probability this same Benhadad son of Hazael is mentioned in the inscription of Zakir (vocalization doubtful) king of Hamath, only in the Aramaic form, as we should expect, בִּיהַדָּד.¹⁹ It is true that Zimmern, *HAV*, 300 f., believes that this name in Pognon's inscription should possibly be read בִּיהַדֵּר (the ה and the ד are nearly alike in the inscription), but the conclusion he reaches is that "die Lesung בִּיהַדָּד zwar nicht unmöglich, jedoch בִּיהַדֵּר mindestens ebenso möglich, wenn nicht noch wahrscheinlicher ist." Lidzbarski, the authority on Aramaic inscriptions, to whom Zimmern appealed, also reached the conclusion that the Pognon inscription *may* have to be read בִּיהַדֵּר rather than בִּיהַדָּד, but he regards it only as a possibility, not a certainty. We may therefore agree with Zimmern that this inscription does not decide the question definitely as was supposed by some scholars. On the other hand with the evidence of the Old Testament, the names of the Senjirli inscriptions, and as we shall

¹⁸ Cf. Zimmern, *KAT*³, 446, n. 1.

¹⁹ Pognon, *Inscr. sémitiques*, 156 f.

see, the names of other Assyrian inscriptions, in favor of the reading ברהדר, we hold that the presumption is that the name in the Pognon inscription should be read ברהדר.

The name Barhadad occurs in the Annals of Assurbanipal (668-625). This Assyrian king records that in his ninth campaign he met the Arabs, led by "Uaiti, son of Hazael, son of the uncle (father's brother) of Uaiti, son of Bir-Dadda." As we have seen, the name Dadda is a variant of Adad (Hadad), and Bir is, of course, the equivalent of the Aramaic Bar (son), with the vowel deflected from *a* to *i*. It is tempting to see in these men the descendants of the Damascus family (Benhadad, Hazael) who, when finally driven from Damascus by Tiglath-Pileser IV (732), established themselves in northern Arabia, where they were found by Aššurbanipal.²⁰ At all events there can be no doubt but that we have here the cuneiform equivalent of Benhadad-Barhadad.

Clay, in his *Light on the Old Testament from Babel*, 318, favors the view long ago proposed by Pinches in the *Proceedings of the Society for Biblical Archaeology* (1883), 71 f., that the original name was Ben-Hadad-'idri, the Hebrew preserving the first part of the name, the Assyrian the latter.²¹ This view, which on first sight seems very attractive, does not, however, account for the fact that both the names Benhadad and Adad-'idri (Hadadezer) occur in both the Hebrew and the Assyrian records. It seems better, therefore, to keep the names separate.

The name "son of *some deity*," is very common in the cuneiform inscriptions. This is especially so in the personal names of the time of the first dynasty of Babylon (the so-called Hammurabi dynasty). The prevalence of west-Semitic or "Amorite" names has long been noticed. See especially Ranke, *Personal Names of the Hammurabi Dynasty*, 76 f.; Bur-Aya, "offspring of Aya," Bur-NIN-GAL, Bur-Nunu, Bur-Adad²² (very common), Bur-Sin (also very

²⁰ Hazael, king of Aribi, had paid tribute to Sennacherib and Esarhaddon; upon his death the latter king placed Ia'û, Hazael's son, upon the throne (Esarhaddon, Prism A, col. III).

²¹ Pinches' view is further discussed by him in *Zeitschrift für Keilschriftforschung*, II, 311 f. See also the objections to this reading by Delitzsch, *ibid.*, 167 f., and Schrader, *ibid.*, 379 f.

²² This name is the same as the name Bur-Rammân, which misled Delitzsch and Winckler, see above. But Bur-^{11u}Ra-ma-na is not the same kind of name as Hadad-Rimmon, ברהדרמון, as Delitzsch thought, *ZK*, 175. Bur-Rammân means "offspring

common). Similar names are Pirḫu-Amurru (MAR-TU), "offspring of Amurru"; Pirḫi-ilišu, "offspring of his god"; Inbi-ilišu, "fruit of his god"; Abil-ilišu, "son of his god"; Abil-ili, Abil-Ištar, Abil-Amurru, Abil-Šamaš, Abil-Sin, etc.

Summing up: There is no reason for changing Benhadad into Bir-'idri, a form which, as far as the evidence now reaches, is purely *hypothetical*. The name in Shalmaneser's inscriptions, written ^{ilu}IM-'idri, is to be read Adad-'idri, that is, the equivalent of the Hebrew Hadadezer. The form Benhadad is to be retained, and compared with Aramaic Barhadad (ܒܪܗܕܕ, Pognon), Bar-Šur, Bar-Rekub,²³ as well as with the Assyrian Bir-Dadda, etc.

The Old Testament account and that of Shalmaneser cannot then be harmonized by identifying Benhadad with ^{ilu}IM-'idri by reading both as Bir-idri. Some other solution of this difficulty must be found.

II. THE HISTORICAL PROBLEM

According to I Kings, chap. 20, Benhadad of Syria moved against Samaria and met defeat at the hands of Ahab. The following year he returned, was met by the Israelites at Aphek and was again defeated. This time he was taken prisoner, but because of "Ahab's unseasonable lenity" was released on condition that he restore the cities his father had taken from Ahab's father (Omri), and that the Israelites be allowed to "make streets," that is, have bazaars in Damascus. Thus far chap. 20. As is generally recognized, chap. 21 belongs to a different narrative—the LXX has it before chap. 20. Chap. 22 opens with the words, "And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel." In the third year Jehoshaphat of Judah, Ahab's ally, joined the Israelitish king in his attempt to take Ramoth-Gilead from the Syrians. In the battle before this city Ahab met his death.

of Ramman"; Hadad-Rimmon, "Hadad is 'the thunderer.'" It is incomprehensible how Huber, *Personennamen*, etc., can regard Bur of Bur-^dIM (Adad), etc., as the name of a deity, p. 172, and at the same time translate the name as Ranke does, "offspring of IM," p. 86. So his god Bir rests upon Hilprecht's assumption discussed above, p. 271. As far as the writer can discover, there is no instance of a name with the element Bur as deity. There certainly is no case in which the determinative for deity stands before this element, which is, of course, the only final test.

²³ This form of name survived even into Christian times in Syria; cf. Bar-Shemesh in the *Doctrine of Addai*.

Shalmaneser, king of Assyria (860-825), tells us that in his sixth year (854) he met and defeated at *Ḳarḳar* the combined forces of the Syrians. At the head of the league was Adad-'idri (Hadadezer, see above) of Damascus, with Ahab of Israel, Irhuleni of Hamath, and others as allies. In his tenth, eleventh,²⁴ and fourteenth years (850-849-846) he was again compelled to meet the armies of this league. Ahab is not mentioned in the accounts of these campaigns.²⁵ In his eighteenth year (842) Hazael is king of Damascus, while Jehu of Israel pays tribute to Shalmaneser. This means that Jehu preferred submission to Assyria to an alliance with Damascus.

It will be observed that the Old Testament does not mention the battle of *Ḳarḳar*, but according to the prevailing interpretation of the Hebrew account in the light of the Assyrian records, the two years' truce mentioned in I Kings 22:1 *follow immediately upon the defeat of Benhadad at Aphek, and leave room for Ahab's presence at Ḳarḳar*. The events of the last five years of Ahab's reign would then have run as follows: 856 or 855, defeats Benhadad at Aphek and makes a treaty with him. Truce for two years, one of which must be 854, the date of the battle of *Ḳarḳar*. Here Ahab is the ally of Hadadezer (according to the prevailing interpretation = Benhadad) of Damascus against Shalmaneser. 853 or 852 Ahab meets his death at Ramoth-Gilead in his effort to take it from the Syrian king.

When one looks at these events more closely, many objections present themselves against the prevailing interpretation of them. Is it probable that the king of Damascus (Adad-'idri of the Assyrian records) who was at the head of the Syrian states for at least 8 years (854-846), during which time he successfully withstood three and perhaps four²⁶ attacks by Shalmaneser of Assyria, should be the same as Benhadad, king of Syria, who according to I Kings, chap. 20, twice met defeat at the hands of Ahab, the second time only escaping with his life because of the generosity of the king of Israel; these two defeats having occurred, according to hypothesis, the third and second, or second and first years before the battle at

²⁴ It is not improbable that there was but one campaign in these two years, that of the eleventh year (Winckler, *KAT*³, 43).

²⁵ Ahab was probably dead in 850. Nor is there any mention of his successor in this rôle.

²⁶ See note 24.

Ḳarḳar? The writer believes that this is not probable, for from the Assyrian account of the battle of Ḳarḳar it is clear that Ahab was the ally of the king of Damascus. Adad-'idri of Damascus had 20,000 troops, Irhuleni of Hamath and Ahab of Israel 10,000 each, while the other Syrian kings brought troops from 10,000 to 200 in number. These are of course round numbers, and it is very probable that the Assyrian scribe exaggerated here as elsewhere for the greater glory of his king. But in spite of this possibility, the fact remains that the king of Damascus was the head of the league from at least 854 to 846. There is no likelihood at all "that Ahab was the moving spirit in the alliance,"²⁷ nor is it necessary to suppose that he was forced into it.²⁸ Then according to hypothesis, a year or two after the battle of Ḳarḳar, the king of Damascus is in possession of Ramoth-Gilead, one of the cities of his late ally, who meets his death in an effort to recapture it. It is apparent that this hypothesis leaves many things unclear. Without discussing farther the prevailing hypothesis the writer will proceed to give his own view and the reasoning on which it is based.

1. Benhadad of I Kings, chap. 20 is not the same person as the Adad-'idri of Shalmaneser's inscriptions. The fact that the names cannot be equated was shown by the first part of this paper. If, in spite of this, it is held that the same person is meant, either the Assyrian or the Hebrew account has made a mistake in the name of the king of Damascus. Kittel thinks the Assyrian account has the name of the wrong Israelitish king; but this does not help out of the difficulty.²⁹ It is hardly likely that either of the accounts

²⁷ H. P. Smith, *Old Testament History*, 195.

²⁸ Shortsighted as the Syrian princes undoubtedly were, they could not help seeing that once Damascus, the strongest state among them, fell before the Assyrian advance, it would be but a matter of a year or two until they would meet the same fate. So we may believe that for once they put aside their own differences and presented a solid front against the common enemy. But, as has happened so frequently in history, Damascus probably soon looked upon this voluntary alliance as submission to her superior power and began to treat the allies as subjects. Ahab would of course have been the first to resent this, and, with no Assyrian army threatening, Adad-'idri would feel it necessary to bring Israel into line.

²⁹ Kittel, *op. cit.*, 357 f., leans to the view that the Assyrian account is untrustworthy and that the battle of Ḳarḳar came after the death of Ahab, that is, the Assyrian scribe has the name of the wrong king of Israel. The reason why Kittel holds this view is evident. According to his chronology the death of Ahab fell in the year 855, the year before Ḳarḳar. His arguments are curious: (1) The books of Kings give a great amount of attention to the wars and other activities of Ahab, but little is said of the wars of his successor. Therefore, if Ahab had been at Ḳarḳar, the Old Testament account would

is wrong in the case of either of the kings, for in other places the Assyrian and Hebrew records usually corroborate each other.³⁰

2. The events of I Kings, chap. 20 and those of I Kings, chap. 22 are not necessarily to be separated by only two years (22:1). The writer starts with a fact overlooked by scholars, namely, that the *name* of the king of Syria is not given in chap. 22. At first sight this may seem a point of no importance, but taken into consideration with other points, it may have some weight. In chap. 20, the *name* of the king of Syria is mentioned twelve times (vss. 1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 16, 17, 20, 26, 30, 32, 33), over against two instances where he is referred to as *king of Syria* (vs. 22, 23). But vs. 22 is admitted to be a late insertion. On the other hand, in chap. 22, the *name* of the king of Syria is not given at all, but in both cases where he is referred to it is as *king of Syria*.³¹ This point need not be pressed, but in connection with the points given above (1), it may help in constructing a hypothesis which seems to the writer to have fewer weak points than the one which is now current.³²

tell of it. (2) The different accounts of the battle of Karkar, as found in Shalmaneser's inscription, give varying and undoubtedly exaggerated figures of the enemy who were killed. In the different accounts the number is given variously as 20,500, 25,000, and 14,000. So the Assyrian scribe may have got Ahab's name into the account instead of Joram's—had he not called Jehu *the son of Omri*? As for the first of Kittel's points, the jess said the better. Kittel shows himself entirely unfitted to pass judgment upon matters connected with Assyrian inscriptions. That the Assyrians should go over a battlefield and count the number of the enemy who were left there is hardly to be expected. The number can at best have been nothing more than an estimate—and that this estimate should have been too low is not probable, nor would it be reduced when copied upon the obelisks and monoliths of the king's palace. But this does not for a moment make the date of the battle uncertain, nor raise the probability that the Assyrian scribe should have put down Ahab's name instead of that of his son. That Jehu is called the son of Omri merely shows that the Assyrians did not bother about the family trees of the kings of Israel. To Assyria, Omri was the founder of the state (Samaria is called House of Omri [Bit-Ḥumri], Land of Omri [Mât-Ḥumri]) and the later kings would be his sons. Jehu son of Omri probably means Jehu of Bit-Ḥumri or Mât-Ḥumri, that is Jehu of Israel. The important point here is that *Jehu*, and not some other king, is mentioned as paying tribute in 842, which fits very well into the history as given in the Old Testament.

³⁰ So Hazael and Jehu are given as contemporaries by Shalmaneser; and Rezôn, Menahem, Pekah, Joahaz of Tiglath-Pileser's inscriptions fit in well with II Kings, chaps. 15 f.

³¹ It is of course a commonplace of Old Testament criticism that popular, more or less unhistorical narratives do not know the names of the rulers referred to. So in the legends of Genesis, etc., we hear about Pharaoh, and the king of Egypt, but in historical narrative we hear about Shishak, Necho, etc. So in the popular Elisha stories, II Kings, chaps. 4 f., we hear often about the king of Syria, but his name is not given. Chap. 6:24, where the name does occur, belongs to another narrative, as is seen from the preceding verse. Chap. 8:7 f., is perhaps a real exception, and here the name Benhadad may have been added later; see below, p. 281.

³² For the discussion of the text and sources the commentaries should be consulted. It will be possible here to note only such facts as bear upon the historical question.

3. From I Kings 20:34 it is evident that Benhadad I of I Kings 15:18 f., and Benhadad II of our chapter cannot be identified.³³ For Benhadad II promises to restore to Ahab the cities which his father took from Ahab's father. Now the name of Benhadad I's father was Ṭab-Rimmôn (I Kings 15:18) and he had been succeeded by his son long before the time of Omri, Ahab's father. It is not impossible that Benhadad II was the son of Benhadad I, but this would be the only case where the son bore the same name as the father. It seems better to assume that another king of Damascus came between the two Benhadads, who may have been grandfather and grandson. There can be no chronological objection to such an arrangement, for we know nothing more about these kings of Syria than our meager accounts in the Old Testament furnish.

4. The events narrated in I Kings, chap. 20 are to be placed in the early part of Ahab's reign of twenty-two years. It has long been recognized that the motive which prompted Benhadad I of Syria "to harken unto King Asa" and to make war upon Israel, was a selfish one. Damascus is by nature a trading center, and its outlet to the sea is by way of Galilee. The cities which he took from Israel, "Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali," lay on this route (I Kings 15:16 f.). How long he held these cities we do not know. We know little about "the acts of Omri³⁴ which he did, and his might which he showed," (16, 27), but it is not unlikely that he made efforts to regain the lost

(1) Apart from 22:1, there is only the reference to the 32 captains of chariots (22:31), that can in any way be regarded as closely connecting chaps. 20 and 22. But the numeral 32 is clearly a gloss from 20:1, suggested by 20:24. (2) Benzinger, *Bücher der Könige*, 117, recognizes that we cannot have in chaps. 20 and 22 all of the "Ahabgeschichte." "Denn ausser den beiden erhaltenen Stücken war im ursprünglichen Zusammenhang dieser Capitel noch mehr von Ahab erzählt: 22:8 setzt doch wohl voraus, das über Ahabs und Michas früheres Zusammentreffen schon einiges erzählt war; 22:25 deutet darauf hin, das auch die Erfüllung der Weissagung an Zedekia berichtet war. Auch die Vorgeschichte der Syrerkriege wird nicht verschwiegen gewesen sein." But he also says (p. 122) that it is clear that 22:1 must be joined directly with 20:34. The writer admits that these sections, 20:1-34 and 22:1 f., belong to the same source, only he would modify Benzinger's statement by saying that 22:1 continues the "Ahabgeschichte" which broke off after 20:34, but that it is probable that some of the lost section of this "Ahabgeschichte" stood between 20:34 and 22:1.

³³ Winckler, *KAT*³, 134, has "Benhadad (vios, 'Aðep) d. i. Bir-'idri," reign from ca. 885-844; contemporaneously with Baasha, Elah, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram.

³⁴ From the Moabite Stone (see Cooke, *op. cit.*, 1 f.) we learn that "Omri, king of Israel he afflicted Moab many days, because Kemosh was angry with his land." The fact that Israel was called "the land of Omri" (see above) also shows the importance of his reign.

territory from Benhadad I and his successor. The tide of battle probably surged back and forth, but finally turned in favor of the king of Syria (20:34). Now Ahab's chief sin, according to the compiler of the Old Testament narrative, was "that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians"—I Kings 16:31. But in spite of the bad effect it may have had on the religion of Israel, this marriage was undoubtedly wise from a political standpoint, for it certainly meant an alliance with Phoenicia which in turn was intended to strike at Damascus. If we place the events of I Kings, chap. 20 near the *beginning* of Ahab's reign they furnish a fitting continuation of the events we should expect followed Ahab's marriage and alliance with Phoenicia. Furthermore, while the exact location of Aphek is not certain, still all the evidence points to the fact that it lay in Esdraelon (20:23 f.), which goes to show that the Syrian wars of chap. 20 were waged north of Samaria, and not east of the Jordan as was the battle at Ramoth-Gilead. The seat of war had evidently shifted between the events of chap. 20 and 22. The events of chap. 20 would then represent Ahab's successful meeting, perhaps after many defeats, of the attempts of Syria to hold or regain its route to the sea.

5. Between the events of I Kings, chaps. 20 and 22, we must leave a space of from ten to fifteen years. Among the "cities which he (Ahab) built" (22:39), or as we should probably say, rebuilt, may have been the Galilee cities referred to above. If our interpretation of the events of chap. 20 is correct, in the years following the battle of Aphek, Ahab would undoubtedly have busied himself in strengthening his kingdom. What better way to begin than by fortifying the cities which had been returned to him by the terms of the treaty? His determination to "afflict Moab" as his father had done³⁵ may also have fallen in this period. Meanwhile Benhadad II was succeeded by Adad-'idri, with whom Ahab formed a willing or unwilling alliance against Assyria.³⁶ Perhaps the two years of peace mentioned at the opening of I Kings 22:1 refer to two years of quiet after the battle of ẖarḡar which the Old Testament account passes over in silence.³⁷ This is not only a possibility,

³⁵ See the Moabite Stone, I. 6.

³⁶ See above, n. 28.

³⁷ Or, as we should probably say, the Old Testament account of which has been lost.

but it seems to the writer a strong probability; for the battle of Ẕarḳar was in all probability not a crushing defeat of the Syrian allies. Shalmaneser failed to follow up his reported success, and it was four years before he was ready to move west again. Meanwhile the allies, undoubtedly badly battered, returned to their homes. Two years of peace followed, and in the third, the king of Damascus, perhaps expecting another attack by the Assyrian king, began to look over his forces. As suggested above, he may have begun to look upon the allies who stood by him at Ẕarḳar as subjects owing him allegiance, and, finding Ahab of Israel unresponsive, may have moved upon his territory. Hence the battle before Ramoth-Gilead. We would identify the *unnamed* king of Syria of I Kings, chap. 22 with Adad-'idri of Shalmaneser's inscriptions, and place the events of chap. 22 in the last years of Ahab's reign.

6. From the side of the Old Testament narrative, the writer sees only one objection that can be raised against this identification, namely, II Kings 8:7 f. According to this account Hazael, after putting *Benhadad* out of the way, usurped the throne of Syria. Now, it is obviously impossible to put a third Benhadad between Adad-'idri and Hazael, for, according to the inscriptions of Shalmaneser, this king's last campaign against Adad-'idri is dated in his fourteenth year (846), while his next campaign against Syria was in his eighteenth year (842), and this time *Hazael* was king of Damascus, while Jehu of Israel paid tribute to Assyria. We must assume, therefore, that the writer of the Elisha stories³⁸ made a mistake. Indeed, this is most probable, for Hazael is evidently not the son of the king whom he smothered to death with a wet blanket, but a usurper. Now Hazael's son's name was Benhadad. It is hardly likely that the name of Hazael's son would have been Benhadad unless his (Hazael's) father's name had also been Benhadad. This point need not be urged strongly. However, it seems most probable to the writer that Adad-'idri was not of the line of the Benhadads and the king who came between these, and that in Hazael and his son Benhadad we may see the restoration of the old line. From I Kings 11:23 f., we learn that Rezon, son of Eliadah, fled

³⁸ From I Kings 19:19 f., it would seem as if the story of Hazael's usurpation of the Syrian throne had also been a part of the Elijah legends.

from his master Hadadezer (Adad-'idri), king of Zobah (a small Syrian province), and settled in Damascus, where he established his line. It was probably at this time that Damascus began to be the leader in Syrian affairs, as Zobah seems to have been previously. Now, although we do not have definite information on the point, it seems probable that Rezin (the name is clearly the same as Rezon and both identical with the Assyrian Raṣunnu) of Damascus was of the line of Benhadad III, II Kings 14:37 f.³⁹ Adad-'idri of Ahab's time may then have been a representative of the old line of the kings of Zobah breaking into the line of the Rezens, Benhadads, and Hazaels.

The history of the relations between Syria and Israel from about 900 B.C. to the time of Jehu, *ca.* 842 B.C., would, according to our reconstruction, read as follows:

About 900 B.C. king Asa of Judah invited Benhadad, son of Tabrimmôn, son of Hezion,⁴⁰ king of Syria, to help him against Baasha of Israel (I Kings 15:18 f.). The Syrian king was only too glad to offer assistance, in view of the fact that by so doing he might secure a free trade route to the sea. As a result of this alliance between Judah and Damascus, Israel lost a number of cities in the Galilee region, along the route from Damascus to the coast (vs. 20). Baasha was succeeded by a number of ephemeral kings in whose reigns the cause of Syria probably did not suffer. Omri, however, was a powerful ruler, and made efforts, though unsuccessful ones (20:34), to regain the lost territory. His struggles were with the father of Benhadad II, whose name we do not know. When Ahab succeeded his father, his first move was to cement an alliance with Phoenicia. This was of course directed against the aggression of Syria in the Galilee region, and soon led to war, in which Ahab was successful even to capturing his opponent Ben-

³⁹ Adad-nirari (812-783), king of Assyria, mentions a Mari, king of Damascus. Some scholars have identified him with Benhadad III, son of Hazael, but this is not necessary. Our suggestion that Rezon of the time of Solomon and Rezin (Rezon) of the time of Tiglath-Pileser IV are of the line of Benhadad and Hazael would be raised almost beyond a doubt if we made the Benhadad of Asa's time, son of Tabrimmôn, son of *Rezôn*, instead of Hezion. Thenius identifies Rezôn and Hezion, but regards Hezion as the correct form (LXX, *Ἐσρων* 11. 23); Winckler, on the other hand, reads the name Hazael, LXX *Luc.* *Ἀζαήλ*, Vat. *Ἀζιυ* (see Benzinger, *Könige*, 100). The reading *Ἀζιυ* would point to an original רִצְוֹן or רִצְוֹן Rezon.

⁴⁰ Perhaps to be read Rezon; see above, n. 39.

hadad II. A treaty was formed, the conditions of which called for the restoration of the cities which Benhadad's father had taken from Ahab's father Omri, and the establishing of Israelitish bazaars in Damascus. The second clause of the treaty, as well as the battlefield of Aphek, shows that the wars between Ahab and Benhadad II were fought for the control of the trade route to the sea. When Benhadad's father controlled this route he had his bazaars in Samaria, but now that Ahab was in control, he was able to dictate terms. So far I Kings, chap. 20; the events recorded here are all to be placed in the early part of Ahab's reign of twenty-two years.

Some time before 854 Benhadad II was succeeded by Adad-'idri, who was able to force or persuade the Syrian states to form an alliance with him against Assyria. Ahab was one of these allies, and fought with him at ẔarẔar (854). The Assyrian king claims a victory, but the battle cannot have been decisive else he would have followed up his reported success. It was four years before Shalmaneser appeared again in Syria. Meanwhile Ahab withdrew from the alliance. This was the signal for renewing the warfare between Damascus and Israel which had been interrupted for a few years in the face of a danger which threatened not only these rival states, but the whole Westland. This time the Syrian king began by taking Ramoth-Gilead, east of Jordan. In the attempt of Ahab and his ally, Jehoshaphat of Judah, to recapture this city, the Israelitish king met his death, I Kings, chap. 22. Ahab's successors carried on the war, as we are able to infer from the Elisha stories, as well as from the fact that the name of no Israelitish king appears among Adad-'idri's allies in Shalmaneser's account of his campaigns of 849 and 846.⁴¹ Between the years 846 and 842, Adad-'idri was disposed of and succeeded by Hazael. When Shalmaneser appeared in Syria in 842 he found Hazael king of Damascus, while Jehu of

⁴¹ For the question as to whether or not Shalmaneser also appeared in the west in 850, see note 24. In the Monolith inscription of Shalmaneser, where the fullest account of the battle of ẔarẔar is given, the names of most of the Syrian allies are given: Adad-'idri of Damascus, Irhuleni of Hamath, Ahab of Israel, etc. In the inscriptions relating the story of the campaigns of (850), 849, and 846, only the names of Adad-'idri of Damascus, and Irhuleni of Hamath, "together with the twelve kings of the seacoast," are given. It is clear from the Monolith inscription that the kings of Hamath and Israel were next in importance to the king of Damascus, and the absence of the name of the king of Israel in the accounts of the following campaign, while that of the king of Hamath is given, clearly points to the non-participation of the Israelitish king.

Israel paid tribute to Assyria. It was only natural that Jehu should submit to Assyria rather than to the hereditary enemy Damascus. Shalmaneser received the tribute of the Tyrians and Sidonians at the same time, a fact which shows that we may be misled if we conclude from the Elisha stories that Jehu's accession necessarily meant a break with Phoenicia.⁴² In 839 Shalmaneser crossed the Euphrates for the twenty-first time, taking four cities belonging to Hazael, and again receiving the tribute of the Phoenician cities Tyre, Sidon, and Byblos. It is significant that he did not meet Hazael again. This king succeeded in taking most of the east Jordan territory from Israel in Jehu's time, II Kings 10:32 f., and later had to be turned away from the gates of Jerusalem by "the gold found in the treasuries of the house of the lord and in the king's house" (II Kings 12:17 f.).

	Israel	Judah	Damascus
ca. 900-890	Baasha Elah Zimri Tibni	Asa	Benhadad son of Ṭab-Rimmôn.
ca. 885	Omri (12 years)		Father of Benhadad II, name unknown.
ca. 875	Ahab (22 years) In early part of reign, wars with Benhadad II (I Kings, chap. 20). In latter part of reign, battle of Karkar (854) and battle before Ramoth-Gilead (I Kings, chap. 22).	Jehoshaphat	Benhadad II Adad-'idri (Hadadezer)
842	Jehu tributary to Shalmaneser.		A year or two before 842, Hazael succeeds Adad-'idri, not Benhadad.

⁴² See, however, Amos 1:9 f.